



Stewarding the Land for Future Generations
Local, Sustainable, Organic

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

August 3rd, 2006- Week 9

Featured Vegetable of the Week: Green Beans

Green beans and other beans, such as kidney beans, navy beans and black beans are all known scientifically as *Phaseolus vulgaris*. They are all referred to as “common beans,” probably due to the fact that they all derived from a common bean ancestor that originated in Peru. From Peru, they were spread throughout South and Central America by migrating Indian tribes. They were introduced into Europe around the 16th century by Spanish explorers returning from their voyages to the New World, and subsequently were spread through many other parts of the world by Spanish and Portuguese traders. Today, the largest commercial producers of fresh green beans include the United States, China, Japan, Spain, Italy and France.

Green beans, an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin A and folate are often called string beans because of a fibrous string that runs along the seam of the bean. The string is noticeable in some varieties when you snap off the ends. The snapping noise is the reason for its other nickname.

To keep your beans fresh for 4-5 days, keep them dry in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator.

Wash beans thoroughly in clear, cool water. Beans can be cooked whole, cut crosswise or diagonally, or French-cut (i.e., cut along the length of the bean). If you want sweet tasting, crisp fresh beans, cut them as little as possible. Cut older, more mature beans in the French style (i.e., lengthwise). Stir-frying is one of the easiest ways to prepare green beans. This method maintains more nutrients than other cooking methods. Whatever cooking method you choose, remember to cook beans as little as possible, using the least amount of water possible. Boiling and steaming are other common methods for preparing green beans. When boiling, beans may release some nutrients into the water, so try to re-use the bean water to regain some of the nutrients lost. For example, you can use the water to boil rice. Green beans continue to cook after you take them out of the boiling water. Either take them out just before they are cooked the way you like, or plunge them into ice water immediately to stop them cooking further. The fewer beans in the pan, the quicker they cook and the better they taste.

Green beans differ from shelling beans in that you eat them fresh and eat both the pods and the bean. Bean varieties are either pole (also called runner) or bush, and grow accordingly. They are frost sensitive, so are planted after the threat of freezing temperatures has past. They grow best in sunny, well-drained areas. Bush beans only produce for about two weeks, so farmers grow them in successions to extend the season.

Announcements

* Boones Farm and the Siskiyou Crest Goat Dairy are holding a goat cheese sale day to get their farmstead dairy open for business! This month we will be offering all of our organic flavored chevre cheeses in 6 oz. containers. To place an order, please call Boones Farm at 899-1694 by Monday, August 7.

Available Chevre Flavors (6 oz.)	Garlic & Basil - \$8	Roasted Red Pepper & Kalamata Olive - \$8	
Sundried Tomato & Basil - \$8	Jalapeno - \$7	Salt & Pepper - \$7	Plain - \$6

* If you are interested in preserving peaches, call 899-9668 or email siskiyoucoop@aol.com to order boxes of #2 peaches from Rolling Hills Farm for a discount. A box of 17 peaches costs \$10.

7000 Little Applegate Road, Jacksonville OR 97530
(541) 899-9668 www.siskiyoucoop.com

Ask the Farmers...

CSA member Jenna Stanke asks “Do you have a suggested method of preparing soil for a future small herb garden? Recommended reading?”



Daniel Wyatt, Wolf Gulch Farm

When you are planting any perennial, you need to really think about soil fertility before you plant because it is your main chance to work the soil. You can always add side dressing once plants are in. I would put a cover crop in this fall, maybe crimson clover since it works great and is easy to kill by hand. In the spring, till in the clover either by hand (with a shovel) or with a rototiller. Let the clover break down for a week or so, then dig a large pit where you want to plant and add lots of compost. For planting medicinal herbs (which is my interest) I recommend the book *Growing Plant Medicine* by Richo Cech. Richo owns Horizon Herbs Farm in Williams. The Horizon Herb catalog is also an amazing resource.

CSA member Amy Johnson asks “Now that organics are becoming more mainstream and large corporations are beginning to take interest in the organic market, how do you see this affecting the majority of small scale, independent farmers?”

Great question Amy! Anytime there is a consolidation of the food source, the risk of instability and potential collapse of that food source increases. This risk increases exponentially when the players involved are driven purely by their bottom line instead of finding a balance between economic sustainability and ecological responsibility. When the latter of those two mitigating factors is removed we begin to see small scale farmers pay the price. Large corporations can label their products organic following USDA guidelines, all the while using agricultural practices that are perpetuating more harm than good to our planet. Monoculture, soil erosion, and irresponsible water use are just a few. The mechanization of these large scale operations can potentially drive the price of organic food unrealistically low creating a paradigm in which small scale farmers cannot compete.



Michael Moss, Boones Farm

CSA Member Corner

Jenna Stanke, a transplant from the great Midwest, lives near Ruch. She’s hoping to get her act together and grow more of her own food someday, but is really enjoying her CSA membership (as are her friends, who often benefit from extras & cooking fests). She keeps busy with her job in fire prevention, volunteering with Applegate Fire, training for the latest “why did I sign myself up for this?” race (next up-Hellgate Challenge), and figuring out new and exciting ways to cook her veggies.

Linda Sanders moved from Southern California, where she retired from Merrill Lynch as a stockbroker. After searching for many years, she and her husband found their “home” in Ashland and have been there 5 years. Linda and her husband have a blended family of four children and six grandchildren, who live in California, North Carolina, and Spain. Her interests are traveling, tennis, hiking, scrapbooking, cooking, and volunteer work. (She and her husband ran the American Cancer Society “Relay For Life of Ashland” last year, raising \$115,000.) CSA was introduced to them several years ago by their daughter in Mill Valley. Linda feels being a part of the CSA provides opportunities not only to learn more about food, but to enjoy fresh produce from local farmers, as well as a feeling that she is contributing to the health of our environment.